



Bill Liddle, Professor of Political Science at The Ohio State University, introduced Lisa Wedeen, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago. Liddle organized the 2009 Islam and Democracy speaker series at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies.



Lisa Wedeen is Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science, as well as an associate member of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Chicago. Wedeen spoke about "The Politics of Deliberation: Qat Chews as Public Spheres in Yemen" on Thursday, May 7, 2009, at the Mershon Center.



Lisa Wedeen spoke to an audience of over 50 Ohio State students and faculty. She is author of numerous articles and two books, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (University of Chicago Press, 1999) and *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power and Performance in Yemen* (University of Chicago Press, 2008).



Lisa Wedeen spoke about the role of qat, a leafy stimulant typically chewed during afternoon socializing, in the Yemeni public sphere. Through her field work in Yemen, she found that qat chews foster a wide range of discussions and interactions among community members, as well as strangers, including intense debates of primarily political issues.





From left to right) Lisa Wedeen, Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago, converses with Rick Herrmann, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Mereson Center for Interantional Security Studies, and John Mueller, Woody Hayes Chair of National Security Studies.



Lisa Wedeen (top left) leads a class discussion about the democratic aspects of qat chews.



Lisa Wedeen (left) describes the different discussions she observed in both male-only and female-only qat chews in Yemen.



Bill Liddle (left), Professor of Political Science, poses a question to Lisa Wedeen (right) about the accountability Yemeni citizens demand from their leaders, as a result of political discussions at qat chews.